



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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DEQ says fish and vegetation will be affected by Katrina

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality expects to see scattered fish kills across southeastern Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Most of these fish kills will be associated with low dissolved oxygen in the water. This low dissolved oxygen results from the organic matter washed into the streams, lakes and bays from storm debris and runoff. As the organic matter in the water is assimilated the oxygen levels will return to levels that will support aquatic life.

In addition, the storm surge has pushed salt water further inland than normally found. This is anticipated to impact the aquatic vegetation that is intolerant to a salty environment. These conditions are expected to stabilize and diminish fairly rapidly.

A similar fish kill and vegetation disturbance effect was seen following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

DEQ will be conducting aerial and ground reconnaissance, and will be documenting and reporting these conditions.